

Laura Newton

YEAR OF CALL: 2009

"She is absolutely superb. Her advocacy is very strong ... She is really first class - her work is very prompt and all of the highest quality, as is her advocacy."

Chambers & Partners 2022

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Practice Overview

Laura Newton is widely regarded as one of the stars of the junior commercial Bar. She is an experienced senior junior with a commercial practice which sees her regularly instructed in high value international commercial disputes and arbitrations, often with a fraud aspect.

Laura's recent instructions include acting for a number of lenders in proceedings arising out of the \$2 billion "tuna bond" scandal involving allegations of bribery and corruption in Mozambique; acting for a City law firm in proceedings arising out of hacking of a businessman's data; acting for a group of Chinese banks in a \$700 million claim against the Indian businessman Anil Ambani; and acting for a number of individuals and corporate defendants in the high-profile Avonwick proceedings between Ukrainian oligarchs.

She has previously been ranked as one of the top 10 commercial juniors at her level. The directories include the following commentary on Laura's capabilities: *"She has a really sharp brain and is very clear in her advice."* *"Very smart and highly capable, she is going places."* *"Clients really like her and she is completely on top of all of the documents."* *"She is super bright and very academically able."* *"Extremely bright. Her written work is fantastic and she is a very gifted advocate. Clients find her reassuring and approachable";* *"She is extremely able and disarmingly bright";* *"Extremely personable and someone who punches above her weight";* *"Highly intelligent";* *"A real star in the making";* *"Extremely clever and enormously diligent. The quality of her written work is well beyond her years";* *"Very accomplished, particularly for her level of call";* *"She assimilates the facts quickly and has good recall";* *"She grasps material and produces high-quality work in very quick time".*

Laura's abilities have been recognised as exceptional for someone of her seniority: she was one of just 10 barristers selected for inclusion in *The Lawyer* Hot 100 2016, and was also featured as one of the *Legal Week*

10 Stars at the Bar 2016. *The Lawyer* noted that, "At just seven years' call Laura Newton has been dubbed a 'superstar' by QCs for her record of bringing in significant commercial litigation mandates and being a 'driving force' in complex case management." *Legal Week* referred to her as "winning plaudits left, right and centre".

Commercial

Laura frequently deals with substantial commercial cases, most of which have an international aspect. Under the umbrella of commercial litigation, Laura's practice spans contractual disputes, civil fraud, banking and finance, and professional liability.

Laura also has experience of shareholder disputes, applications against directors, applications under the Companies Act 2006, applications under the Insolvency Act, and advising in relation to company law issues.

- **ICBC v Anil Ambani** [2020] EWHC 1403 (Comm): acting for a group of Chinese banks in a \$700 million guarantee claim against the Indian businessman Anil Ambani. ICBC successfully obtained summary judgment against Mr Ambani for the full amount of its claim, and the matter is now proceeding to enforcement.
- **Avonwick Holding Limited v Azitio Holdings Limited & others**: acting for a number of individuals and corporate defendants in the high-profile Avonwick proceedings between Ukrainian oligarchs. The claims against Laura's clients were dismissed in their entirety following the Phase 1 trial in these proceedings.
- **West Ham United Football Club Limited v E20 Stadium LLP**: acting for the owner of the former Olympic Stadium in claims by West Ham United regarding its use of the Stadium under a 99 year Concession Agreement.
- **Corbiere and ors v Xu** [2018] EWCA Civ 1899: committal proceedings in a breach of confidence case arising out of the theft of a hedge fund's confidential trading strategies. Laura was instructed in the original committal proceedings that resulted in a sentence of thirteen months' imprisonment, and in the appeal in which that sentence was upheld.
- **Slater & Gordon v Watchstone plc**: acting for Slater & Gordon in its £600 million claim against Watchstone for fraud and breach of warranty which settled shortly before trial in October 2019.
- **Cukurova v Alfa Telecom Turkey Limited**: instructed by Cukurova in its multi-billion dollar battle regarding control of Turkcell, the largest mobile phone company in Turkey
- **Agate Assets SA v Rothschild et al**: instructed by Rothschild in Commercial Court claims concerning declaratory relief in relation to €30m loan notes backed by Commerzbank bonds and a third party unsecured loan.
- **TARBS Europe SA and City West Centre PTY Limited v the Republic of Macedonia and others**: instructed by the Macedonian government to defend claims in excess of €80 million under a television licence agreement.

- **Hayward v Striker Trustees Limited et al:** instructed by members of the Hayward family in an offshoot of a long-running dispute over the estate of Sir Jack Hayward in the Bahamian courts and other offshore jurisdictions.
- **National Westminster Bank plc v Kotonou** [2015] All ER (D) 11 (Nov): acted for the successful Respondent in the Court of Appeal in the context of a guarantee claim concerning abuse of process.
- **Anastasia Goncharova v Natalia Zolotova:** the High Court proceedings of a high-profile international dispute over the estate of Georgian oligarch Kakha Bendukidze.
- **X v Y:** instructed in a dispute in the Technology & Construction Court regarding damages claims arising from provisional of a defective website.

Civil fraud

- **Avonwick Holding Limited v Azitio Holdings Limited & others:** acting for a number of individuals and corporate defendants in the high-profile Avonwick proceedings between Ukrainian oligarchs. The claims against Laura's clients were dismissed in their entirety following the Phase 1 trial in these proceedings.
- **Bank Alkhair & Dar Al Arkan v Al Refai:** a Commercial Court claim by a Bahraini Bank to enforce Bahraini judgments against Mr Al Refai totalling \$4 million, in proceedings which were featured as one of the Lawyer's Top 20 cases of 2014.
- **Tugushev v Orlov et al:** instructed by the claimant to obtain a \$350m worldwide freezing injunction in a joint venture dispute between Russian businessmen.
- **X v Y:** substantial fraud proceedings in the Commercial Court regarding claims for misappropriation of assets and breach of fiduciary duty in relation to an international group of companies operating out of Russia and other offshore locations such as the BVI and Cayman Islands.
- **Ukrsibbank v Polyakov:** proceedings under section 25 of the Civil Jurisdiction and Judgments Act 1982 involving allegations of misappropriation of assets valued in excess of \$100 million.
- **Terra Raf Trading Co Ltd v Aidar Assaubayev and others:** Commercial Court proceedings against a prominent Kazakh businessman in respect of a \$5 million transaction.
- **Re P:** Instructed as sole Counsel on behalf of multiple defendants in substantial fraud claims in the Chancery Division by 79 investors in a property investment scheme.
- **JSC Bank of Moscow v Kekhman:** Bankruptcy proceedings in the context of a multi-jurisdictional Commercial Court dispute over claims in excess of \$150 million

Arbitration

International arbitration forms a large part of Laura's practice. She has been involved as sole Counsel, as well as being led, in a number of substantial LCIA and ad hoc arbitrations. Examples of recent instructions

include:

- An LMAA arbitration regarding a superyacht valued in excess of €200 million.
- An LCIA arbitration involving a dispute between a Korean steel pipe distributor and its Romanian supplier, as sole Counsel.
- An LCIA arbitration of a substantial unfair prejudice claim in respect of a mining business.
- An LCIA arbitration of a dispute over a licence to operate a fashion television channel.
- A Beth Din arbitration regarding a partnership dispute.
- A Swiss arbitration arising out of a settlement agreement compromising a substantial fraud claim in excess of \$100 million, instructed by a national government.
- An LCIA arbitration of claims of €18 million in lost dividend arbitrage profits by an ex equity trader.
- An LCIA arbitration concerning the terms of engagement of a corporate finance specialist in connection with a \$30 million loan facility, as sole Counsel.
- An ad hoc arbitration arising out of the dissolution of a solicitors' firm.

Professional negligence

- **A v B**: professional negligence claims against a Big Four accountancy firm in relation to advice on a tax avoidance scheme.
- **X v Y**: Two multi-billion dollar professional negligence claims in the Middle East against a leading accountancy firm.

Education & Qualifications

Hatfield College, Durham University:

LLB (Dunelm), First class honours

Baxter Prize for top performance in college

Cervantes Prize for top performance in year

St Catherine's College, University of Oxford:

BCL (Oxon), Distinction

Allen & Overy Prize for the Best Performance in Global Comparative Financial Law

Allen & Overy Prize for the Best Performance in Corporate Insolvency Law

College honours for top performance in the BCL

Astbury Scholarship, Middle Temple

University College London: Visiting Tutor in Tort Law

King's College London: Examiner in Trusts Law

Memberships

COMBAR

Chancery Bar Association

LCIA

YIAG

Commercial Fraud Lawyers' Association

Young Fraud Lawyers' Association

Directory Quotes

Chambers & Partners, 2022 (Commercial Dispute Resolution)

"She has a really sharp brain and is very clear in her advice."

Chambers & Partners, 2022 (Fraud: Civil)

"She is absolutely superb. Her advocacy is very strong and she is really strong on complex fraud issues."

"She is really first class - her work is very prompt and all of the highest quality, as is her advocacy."

Chambers & Partners, 2022 (Chancery: Commercial)

"Her advice is excellent. She is super bright and just very nice to work with."

Chambers & Partners, 2021 (Commercial Dispute Resolution)

"Very smart and highly capable, she is going places." "Clients really like her and she is completely on top of all of the documents."

Chambers & Partners, 2021 (Fraud: Civil)

"She is super bright and very academically able."

Chambers & Partners, 2021 (Chancery: Commercial)

"Very user-friendly and always on top of the detail."

Chambers & Partners UK & Global, 2020 (Commercial Dispute Resolution)

"Hard-working and bright, she is very responsive and very good at getting on top of all the issues and thinking them through."

Chambers & Partners, 2020 (Fraud: Civil)

"She's one of the quickest barristers - she turns around high-quality work in no time at all." "She's really impressive, easy to work with and makes time to take calls."

Chambers & Partners, 2019 (Chancery: Commercial)

"Extremely personable and someone who punches above her weight."

Chambers & Partners, 2019 (Commercial Dispute Resolution)

"Laura Newton is very user-friendly, hard-working, good to have on a team and very mature; she comes across as so much more than a junior." "She's a rising star."

Chambers & Partners, 2019 (Fraud: Civil)

"Extremely bright. Her written work is fantastic and she is a very gifted advocate. Clients find her reassuring and approachable." "Highly intelligent."

Chambers & Partners, 2018 (Chancery: Commercial)

"Very nice and very willing to help out, she really does make herself available." "A superb junior, who despite

her outstanding legal abilities is very modest."

Chambers & Partners, 2018 (Commercial Dispute Resolution)

"Extremely easy to deal with and very friendly, she helps put clients at ease." "She produces things very quickly and she really masters the evidence."

Chambers & Partners, 2018 (Fraud: Civil)

"Bright, hard-working and praised by her leaders. She has a great future." "Extremely easy to deal with. Very friendly."

Chambers & Partners, 2017 (Fraud: Civil)

"She is very personable and very diligent, and has judgement beyond her years." "She grasps material and produces high-quality work in very quick time."

Chambers & Partners, 2017 (Chancery: Commercial)

"She is extremely able and disarmingly bright."

The Legal 500, 2022 (Commercial Litigation)

"Extremely talented and a huge pleasure to work with. Proactive and very user-friendly."

The Legal 500, 2021 (Commercial Litigation)

'An outstanding junior who deals with issues of complexity and gravity with great confidence.'

The Legal 500, 2020 (Commercial Litigation)

'Delightful to work with and always makes herself available.'

The Legal 500, 2022 (Fraud: Civil)

"First rate – very easy to work with and extremely knowledgeable."

The Legal 500, 2021 (Fraud: Civil)

'Highly intelligent and analytical, always completely on top of the detail, has a collaborative working style, a

very sharp mind and is a pleasure to work with.'

The Legal 500, 2020 (Fraud: Civil)

'A very clear thinker and her pleadings are clear, thoughtful and well-measured.'

The Legal 500, 2018-19 (Commercial Litigation)

'Sensible, pragmatic responsive, and understands solicitors' practices from previous experience.'

The Legal 500, 2017 (Commercial Litigation)

'An up-and-coming star.'

The Legal 500, 2018 (Fraud: Civil)

'A great team player who provides fantastic support to leaders and solicitors.'

The Legal 500, 2017 (Fraud: Civil)

'Very clever, hardworking and very good at keeping a strong market profile.'

The Legal 500, 2016 (Commercial Litigation – Top Ten Under Eight Years' Call)

'She continues to impress with her knowledge and approach to cases.'

The Legal 500, 2016 (Fraud: Civil)

'A real star in the making.'

The Legal 500, 2015 (Fraud:Civil)

"She is diligent, personable, and intelligent, with judgement beyond her years."

Chambers & Partners, 2016 (Fraud)

Very well-regarded junior counsel who is capable of appearing unled in high-value cases. *"Extremely clever and enormously diligent. The quality of her written work is well beyond her years and she is also a very good team player with a very warm personality."*

Chambers & Partners, 2016 (Chancery: Commercial)

Handles a wide and varied commercial litigation caseload, and is often involved in cases considering points of company and insolvency law. *"She assimilates the facts quickly and has good recall. She is always very personable and friendly. You can work well with her in a team."*